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Shafali Verma

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INDIA WOMEN FACE DOMINANT AUSSIES FOR SPOT IN FINAL

Harmanpreet and Co will have to play out of their skin to overcome an indomitable Australia in the second semifinals of ICC Women's World Cup

KAUR & CO FACE STIFF CHALLENGE

After what was a topsy-turvy road to the semis, it seemed like India were going in with a settled unit. But injury to Pratika Rawal meant Shafali Verma came in as a replacement. Australia are the defending champions and haven't lost a world cup game since 2017. For them to be beaten, the hosts will have to be perfect across all 100 overs

FOCUS ON SHAFALI AND HEALY

- The Haryana batter has been given a morale boost. They have backed her to play the natural game and take the attack to the Australians. But it is a gamble and loaded with a lot of risk | **P17**
- Australia are keeping their cards close on Healy's fitness. She trained on Tuesday before skipping Wednesday's optional practice

Seven

AUSTRALIA IS THE ONLY TEAM TO HAVE WON WC TITLES SO MANY TIMES

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

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'CUSTODY' JOKE ON PAK

President Droupadi Murmu with Squadron Leader Shivangi Singh, India's first woman Rafale fighter jet pilot, at the Indian Air Force Station in Ambala. Pakistani social media had falsely claimed to have captured Singh during 'Operation Sindoor'

President Murmu takes 'unforgettable' Rafale flight

President Murmu on Wednesday took a sortie in a Rafale jet from Ambala Air Force Station. She called it an "unforgettable" experience | PTI

Trump latest: Modi tough as hell, nicest-looking guy

'I'm doing a trade deal with India.' Adds he has great respect for PM

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday said that he is "doing a trade deal with India," while lavishing praise on Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "the nicest-looking guy" and "tough as hell." Speaking at the APEC CEO Summit in Gyeongju, South Korea, Trump also reiterated his controversial claim that he personally averted a war between India and Pakistan by using trade pressure on both nations.

"Prime Minister Modi is the nicest-looking guy. He's a killer. He's tough as hell. No, we will fight. I said, Whoa, this is the same man that I know," Trump told business leaders, then he recounted how he 'persuaded' both India and Pakistan to halt military action. "I said, 'You're starting a war with Pakistan — we can't make a trade deal.' And within two days, they called me back and said, 'We stopped fighting.' Isn't that amazing?" he said. The US President also referred to the ongoing trade negotiations with India, emphasising that both countries share "a great relationship."

"I'm doing a trade deal with India, and I have great respect and love for Prime Minister Modi. We have a great relationship," he said. Trump also praised Pakistan's Field Marshal Asim Munir, describing him as "a great fighter," and said he warned both countries that trade with the United States would cease if hostilities continued. "These are two nuclear nations. I told both sides we won't do trade if they fight. Within 24 to 48 hours, it was over," he claimed.

Trump claimed that the leaders of both India and Pakistan called him after two days and stopped fighting. "After literally two days, they called up, they said, we understand, and they stopped fighting."

United States President Donald Trump speaks at the APEC CEO summit in Gyeongju, South Korea | PTI

India-bound Russian oil tanker does U-turn

A tanker carrying Russian crude oil to India turned around and went adrift in the Baltic Sea after US sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil, Bloomberg reported. Loaded with about 730,000 barrels of crude from Rosneft on October 20, it set sail for Sikka in Gujarat and was expected to arrive in mid-November.

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Man held for bid to damage idols at B'luru temple

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

TENSION gripped Devarabeesanahalli after a man entered the premises of a temple wearing slippers and allegedly tried to damage the idols while raising religious slogans on Tuesday morning. Locals caught him, tied him to a tree and thrashed him before handing him over to the police.

The accused, Kabir (45), is a cobbler and resident of Devarabeesanahalli. The incident took place at the Venu Gopalaswamy Temple. Recording a video, the residents claimed that he raised religious slogans before entering the temple. **P5**

Couple held for road rage murder of delivery boy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A man and a woman were arrested on charges of killing a 24-year-old delivery boy in a road rage incident at Sri Rama Layout in JP Nagar 7th phase on October 25. The deceased was identified as Darshan N, a resident of Gundappa Layout in Uttarahalli. His friend G Varun, also a delivery boy who was riding pillion, is undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Darshan N

The accused were arrested on Tuesday and identified as Manoj Kumar (36), a kalaripayattu instructor and a resident of Arakere. Kumar is running a kalaripayattu academy on Bannerghatta Road. Along with him, a woman identified as Aarathi Sharma (30), also from Arakere, was arrested. Both of them have been remanded in judicial custody. The relationship between the accused is yet to be ascertained.

The incident happened between 11.30 pm and 11.35 pm last Saturday, on the 1st cross in Sri Rama Layout in JP Nagar 7th Phase.

Police said the victim, while riding a two-wheeler, had touched the mirror of the accused's car. **CONTINUED ON: P3**

Rahul warns of 'poll theft' bid in Bihar

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ Muzaffarpur/ Darbhanga

ARRIVING late but greeted by roaring crowds both at Sakra in Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi touched the hearts of mostly youthful audiences waving Congress and RJD flags amid drizzle on Wednesday.

Launching his first election rally in Bihar's Sakra in Muzaffarpur district, Rahul chose Prime Minister Narendra Modi as his prime target for a blistering attack at election rallies at Sakra and Darbhanga. He made passing references to the grand alliance's chief ministerial face Tejashwi Yadav and the current CM Nitish Kumar while going after the PM and listing all his policy 'follies' from demonetisation to GST and beyond.

At Sakra, in a densely populated Muslim and SC area, Rahul accused Modi of attempting to steal the Bihar election. "Whatever you are getting is due to this *Samvidhan*, but this Constitution is attacked by the BJP and RSS. Modi *chunav chura rahe hai* (stealing polls). He stole it in Maharashtra and Haryana, and is now attempting in Bihar," Rahul alleged.

Tejashwi Yadav in conversation with Rahul Gandhi at Sakra in Bihar | PTI

He went on to place the SIR (Special Intensive Revision) of poll rolls conducted by the Election Commission of India in the same 'election theft' basket. SIR was first done in Bihar and is to be replicated in 12 other states/UTs.

DECODE BIHAR POLL

EXPRESS READ

Internal quota draft bill to be tabled in cabinet

Bengaluru: The state government will bring in a law for effective implementation of internal quota for Scheduled Castes. The draft bill will be tabled at Thursday's cabinet meeting | **P4**

SC to set up guidelines for framing of charges

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it needs to frame pan-India guidelines to address the problem of inordinate delays in the framing of charges against the accused | **P11**

India and China agree to maintain peace at border

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

INDIA and China agreed to maintain peace and stability at the border during a fresh round of high-level military talks. The 23rd meeting of Corps Commanders of the Indian Army and China's People's Liberation Army took place at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh on October 25.

"This was the first meeting of the 'General Level' mechanism in the western sector since the 22nd round of Special Representatives' talks held on August 19," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. "Both sides agreed to continue to use existing mechanisms to resolve any ground issues along the border to maintain stability," it said.

The Chinese Defence Ministry said India and China "engaged in active and in-depth communication on the management of the western section of the China-India border." The Corps Commanders agreed to continue communication and dialogue through military and diplomatic channels "and jointly safeguard peace and tranquillity in the China-India border areas," it added.

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64-year-old alleges harassment after daughter's death

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A grieving 64-year-old father was made to pay bribes at every step — from an ambulance driver, to police, to crematorium staff and to civic officials — all the while mourning the death of his only daughter. What should have been a solemn farewell turned into a nightmare of corruption, bureaucracy and inhumanity for the elderly man and his wife.

Akshaya Sivakumar (34), an IIT Madras and IIM Ahmedabad graduate who worked in the city, died of a brain haemorrhage on September 18, hours after father, Sivakumar K, a former chief financial officer (CFO) of a central PSU, and his 63-year-old wife Sugantha arrived from Mumbai to be with her.

In a detailed LinkedIn post, Sivakumar shared his ordeal after a month of his daughter's death, writing that he wanted to "share with everyone the state of affairs when one loses their dear one". He described how he had to deal with corruption and apathy from multiple agencies.

He wrote, "The ambulance guy said pay Rs 5,000 for taking her from one hospital in Kasavanahalli to St John's in Koramangala. Police were so rude, especially the inspector, when his juniors said we can go ahead with the postmortem." He said the inspector's attitude changed only after his former employer "pulled the right strings".

CONTINUED ON: P7

> **I had money, so I paid. But what will the poor do?**
>
> Sivakumar K, former CFO of a PSU